

Frequently Asked Questions (that haven't been asked before) For Parents

What does LGBTIQ-A Affirming Mean?

LGBTIQ-A stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, questioning and allied. A group that affirms these identities acknowledges and celebrates same-sex adult relationships in the same way that most of our society acknowledges and celebrates heterosexual relationships. The group also recognizes and celebrates other differences in family and relationship structures that are not often visible or celebrated in society at large, such as single-parent and mixed-race households. The group values differences among individuals and encourages youth to experiment and feel comfortable with a variety of gender expressions. It also provides a safe and affirming space for youth who have variant gender or sexual identities, such as youth who are transgender or intersex.

What will my child be learning about LGBTIQ issues?

Your child will learn that being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, gender non-conforming, queer or straight are all lovely and acceptable things to be. They will learn that many people are not heterosexual, and that not all families contain a father, a mother, and 2.6 children. They will be taught that gender norms can limit one's self-expression and that many children and adults joyfully express themselves in ways that do not fit with what is often considered "normal" or "appropriate" for people like them.

What is a GSA?

A GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) is an LGBTIQ-affirming club, usually based in a school. There are hundreds of GSAs in North Carolina. They do everything from throwing parties and other social events to advocating for changes in school policies to holding support/hang out meetings and more. We will encourage and support students in forming GSAs in their schools.

How is this group related to iNSIDEoUT's group for teenagers?

iNSIDEoUT's program for teenagers is a youth-led network that runs social, activist, and educational events for LGBTIQ-A youth ages 13 and older all over the Triangle and beyond. Teens from this group will often volunteer with the younger children and assist with programming and group activities. As children graduate from the program for 7-12 year olds, we hope they will continue to participate in iNSIDEoUT with other teenagers.

What will my child be learning about youth exercising power?

Most children in our society have been trained not to take initiative, and to do whatever adults tell them to do. They often get the message that their voices do not matter, and they are rarely given a space to exercise power over themselves or within their communities. We hope to teach children that their voices do matter, and that not everything adults say should be accepted blindly. Adults enforce many of society's harmful norms, and we believe that if given the opportunity, children can teach us a great deal about being yourself. We want to cultivate a space in which children exercise power and believe in their ability to change the world.

What will my child be learning about sex and sexuality?

It is important to differentiate between sex, on the one hand, and sexuality/gender on the other. We believe that parents/guardians should be the primary source of honest and reliable information about children's bodies and sex. Providing sex education is beyond the scope of this group. However, because we promote a safe and healthy space for LGBTQ youth, issues of sexuality and gender will likely arise and we aim to cultivate a non-judgmental space where children's ideas on these subjects will not be shut down, but will be validated and listened to. If you have concerns or questions or would like to know more about the group please do not hesitate to contact us.

What foods will be served?

We will provide healthy snacks at all meetings. This may include fresh fruit, vegetable trays, hummus or cheese and crackers, dried fruit and nuts, and juice. Sweets and chips will be offered occasionally but kept to a minimum. Please be sure to let us know if your child has any allergies or dietary restrictions.

How can I support my child and his/her participation in this group?

Encourage your children to talk with you about the group and the activities they participate in while at the group meetings. Ask them to share with you their thoughts and feelings about the topics discussed at the meetings. Visit a meeting to help out. Make a donation to iNSIDEoUT, in order to ensure that we can continue programming for a long time to come!